

NSC BRIEFING

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2 March 1955

SOVIET PROMOTIONS

- I. Surprise Soviet promotions announced 28 Feb: three former "deputy chairmen" of Council of Ministers were upped to senior rank of "first deputy chairmen." In view Malenkov ouster, the three (Mikoyan, Saburov, Pervukhin) could have as logically been demoted instead. At same time, four new faces added to Council, not with bottom rank of "member," but with next higher rank of "deputy chairmen."
- A. Presidium of Council (top government body, made up of "Chairman," all "first deputy chairmen") thus raised from three to six people.
- B. Presidium now includes all top party figures except Khrushchev and Voroshilov (not on Council) and Malenkov (now only a "deputy chairman").
- C. Malenkov's Council position now inferior to that of any other top party member.
- D. Changes both broaden leadership base of Soviet government and confirm continuing influence of younger industrial technicians and central planning specialists.
- E. Although some of promoted managerial bureaucrats have been long-time Malenkov associates, they apparently owe their rise to fact they able--nearly indispensable--administrators.
- II. Changes also emphasize importance USSR currently attaches to defense industries.

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- A. One new deputy chairman (Zavenyagin) a leading figure in Soviet atomic energy program; another (Khrunichev) a former Minister of Aviation Industries.
- B. Zhukov (Minister of Defense) did not get promotion to "deputy chairman" level--thus, armed forces have no Council representation at upper levels except for Premier Bulganin (former Defense Minister).
- C. On other hand, no secret police members (MVD or KGB) promoted, either.
- D. Three top promotions (to "first deputy chairman") perhaps to demonstrate continued unity at the top, to suggest no widespread purge of former Malenkov supporters in office.
 1. Mikoyan one of most outspoken for consumer goods program. Saburov and, to lesser extent, Pervukhin also thought to have been Malenkov followers.